OOC: Sociology of Homosexuality among Astral Dragons.

BB — I got a good question in a comment. I will answer it publicly.

> Just how many homosexual dragons are there? 1 in 10, 1 in 100, 1 in 500?
> -Dragon

Briefly: 1% by one sensible definition, 4% by another, and various other numbers by various less sensible definitions.

Transsexuality among Astral Dragons

"Homosexuality" for humans is of course defined relative to the principal's sexual identity. Sexual identity is rather less fluid among the highly-dimorphic dragons than among barely-dimorphic species like humans, but it is common enough to complicate the discussion. About 45% of astral dragons have some nontrivial wish to live as or have been born as the opposite sex (the exact number is very sensitive to definitions of course). About 9% of astral dragons would be genderfluid or transsexual if it were culturally possible: higher than for humans, probably because of the gender dimorphism.

A very small fraction, ≪1%, actually *do* live or identify as the opposite sex. They are most often M2F bachelor drake-bodied dragons who shapeshift to dragoness bodies for much of their life, which is one of the ways to reduce one's already low status even further. F2M is all but impossible, since female-bodied dragonesses are obliged to marry drakes and live as female. There are exceptions, but they are rare and basically involve the the trans-drake defying or leaving the whole of draconic culture.)

I am not identifying transsexuality and homosexuality. I am merely acknowledging the existence of transsexuality, and noting that it complicates the definitions in the following discussion. E.g., a would-be-F2M and homosexual (viz. female-hatched, M2F, and male-preferring) dragon will generally appear to be a dragoness in a completely conventional marriage with a drake. Chevethna from *Mating Flight* is to some degree in this situation, I believe, though Chevethna certainly wouldn't tell *me*, or anyone, if it were true. (But those shiny blue-glowing spikes Chevethna usually wears, matching Arthane's, are distinctly masculine.)

Let me ignore transsexuality and genderfluidity here, and use 'sex' to refer to birth sex, which is in most cases the sex that the dragon is socially required to use. In this definition Chevethna is counted as heterosexual — agreeing with Chevethna's self-identification — despite a far more complex underlying reality.

Homosexuality and Bisexuality among Astral Dragons.

In isolation, about 40% of dragons are capable of attraction to their own sex to some substantial degree. Of those, a tiny fraction (≪ 1%) are gold star homosexuals who have never twined with a member of the opposite sex, since mating flights are not optional. Many more (1% or so) are

dominantly homosexual — Ythac is one of these — who would prefer to stick with their own sex, but are capable of sufficient heterosexuality to participate to some extent in a mating flight.

A far larger fraction (10% - 80% depending on your definitions) are bisexual to some degree, with the high end of the scale for horny dragons (*viz.* most dragons) who are happy to engage in heterosexual-bodied twining with one or both partners sex-shifted. The latter is a thing that nearly all married couples have experimented with. (Don't tell Jyothky!) Since that involves a male-identified person copulating with a male-bodied person, and similarly for female, it may be considered a homosexual act for both parties, if one wishes (which the typical participants emphatically do not wish).

But for a dominantly homosexual **lifestyle**: Remember that 33% of all dragons — 50% of all drakes — do not get to marry, and have scanty possibility of sexual contact with dragonesses for most of a very long life. They have about some choices. They often switch from choice to choice over the centuries; we take a synchronic view.

1. **Celibacy**. This is the default assumption about bachelors, and is true in about 40% of cases. Celibacy by definition does not overlap with the other cases, but the other cases *do* overlap with one another.
2. **Adultery with a married dragoness.** This is challenging and risky, and occurs as a stable relationship (polyamorous or antagonistic) in some 6% of cases. Dessvaria, Ythac's mother, is in this 6%. Nrararn and Osoth's premarital arrangement puts Osoth+Jyothky formally in this 6% too, though given the libidos involved not much actually happens there; such premarital arrangements account for a substantial fraction of the 6%.
3. **Adultery with a married drake.** Easier than with a dragoness, but inconvenient and rare and socially shocking. Also, the sort of drake who would be interested in such an affair frequently has the basic self-awareness and easy opportunity not to get married in the first place. This happens less than 1% of the time.
4. **Copulation with small people.** This is an unimportant pecadillo, little different from masturbation — unless there is emotional involvement and a desire for public acknowledgement, in which case it is a shameful matter. (Exception: affairs with gods of other species are not shameful.) Some 50% of bachelor drakes indulge in this to some degree. At any given time some 3% have stable, emotionally engaged relationships with small people, of which very few are publicly acknowledged. (Definitions are challenging here: a lot more than that have a long-term arrangement with a small-person prostitute or kept woman, which has *some* emotional involvement. I am counting those who say "I love you" or the equivalent outside of coitus.) Note that most dragon/small relationships take a small fraction of the dragon's lifespan.
5. **Homosexuality with another drake.** Some 55% of bachelor drakes have engaged in this to some degree. Mount-duelling associations are quite popular among bachelor drakes, as they satisfy both the need to fight and the need to fuck. This is considered about the same as masturbation: undignified but universal.</p>
   Perhaps 20% of these drakes have been in long-term emotionally-involved homosexual relationships (by the same "I love you" test as for small people), so that's 11% of

bachelor drakes and about 4% of all dragons. These relationships are just a bit less shameful (or hidden) than dragon/small relationships. These relationships do not last as long as heterosexual *marriages* on the average, but that is probably due to (1) the drakes can choose to break up, but divorce is rare and difficult for heterosexual couples; (2) Newlyweds spend duodecades working on falling in love with each other [not easy considering that most dragons are self-centered assholes], and this is an expected beginning to a marriage; drakes have no such process.

In most of these cases the line between sexual *preference* and sexual *availability* is unclear. Certainly most bachelor drakes express a preference for dragonesses. If all available sexual partners for a drake are other drakes, and the drake is horny and not too picky, the drake will often choose homosexual behavior. A great many mount-duelling associations are called "Second Choice Club" or something like that.

Lesbian dragonesses have far less freedom, having minimal choice but to marry. Most of these apply, mutatis mutandis, to married homosexual *drakes*, but those are rare, since they have such an easy time not to marry. Their choices are:

1. **Avoiding the issue.** The lesbian-oriented dragoness pretends to be heterosexual and hopes nobody (including herself) notices that she wishes she weren't. A sure path to millennia of dissatisfaction. Quite common — as is marriage to a partner one does not actually like very well in the long term, even if one is heterosexual.
2. **Affairs with dragonesses.** The lesbian-oriented dragonesses marry drakes, they do the work to fall in love with their husbands, they don't succeed as well as they would hope, they fall in love with another married dragoness. This sort of relationship seems to happen (as a long-term stable thing) for some 4% of dragonesses, counting polyamory / open marriages (not officially acceptable but they do happen) as well as less honest adultery (ditto).
3. **Lesbian Separatist Dragonesses.** A tiny number of dragonesses run away with their lesbian lovers. They pretty much have to leave dragon-worlds entirely; unmarried dragonesses are very valuable, and generally are either returned forcibly to their home worlds, or kept and married against their will. Actual escape of lesbian couples is hard to manage, but has happened.

Summary

Astral-draconic society does not handle homosexuality as well as, say, American society in the 1950's.